

Loudoun County School Board Meeting

ACTION ITEM

SUBJECT: Arcola Elementary School

SUMMARY: On August 10, 2004, School Board staff brought an information item before the Board regarding Arcola Elementary School. The item outlined various options regarding the future of Arcola Elementary School as related to the Fall 2005 planned opening of Pinebrook Elementary School (ES-8). In addition to relieving projected overcrowding at Arcola, Hutchison Farm, and Little River Elementary Schools, part of the rationale for the acceleration of Pinebrook Elementary School, located within the Kirkpatrick Farms subdivision, dealt with the possible demolition and reconstruction of Arcola Elementary School.

School Board staff reported that as of August 2004, the Freedom High School Cluster had 5062 single family detached, 2599 single family attached, and 2011 multifamily approved dwelling units to be built. The approved dwelling units would add approximately 5682 students (K-12) to Loudoun County Public Schools based on current student generation factors. Approximately 2898 of these students would attend elementary school in the Freedom Cluster, creating the need for at least 3.2 elementary schools.

Further, staff reported that in addition to the approved residential development, applications in the County's rezoning/by-right review process could potentially add another 1693 single family detached, 1216 single family attached, and 213 multifamily residential units to those which are already approved to be built. The development applications currently in the review process, as reported in August, could add an estimated 995 additional elementary-age students or at least 1.1 elementary schools (above and beyond the aforementioned elementary schools) to the area.

Presently, Loudoun County Public Schools has two proffered sites in the area (Kirkpatrick Farms and South Riding Station), thus enabling the county to accommodate approximately 1784 future elementary-age students in the area. Staff is seeking another proffered site in the area as part of the Stone Ridge rezoning application. It is likely the request for an elementary school site will not materialize. The

developer believes the public obligation has been fulfilled with the Mercer Middle School proffer. This would still leave LCPS with a deficit of 1114 seats with currently approved subdivision applications. The deficit increases to 2109 seats if applications in process are considered. At the current time, there is a significant unmet elementary school need that will only increase during the immediate, CIP planning period.

This fall, staff will be recommending an attendance boundary for Pinebrook Elementary School in preparation for the Fall 2005 opening of the school. Direction as to what will occur with regard to Arcola Elementary School will be an important part of the boundary input process, the attendance boundary recommendation, and recommendations concerning future CIP projects and land acquisition.

The School Board Adopted FY 2005 CIP contains an addition/renovation to the current Arcola Elementary School. The project will be part of the FY 2008 bond referendum (November 2007). The project includes making the facility compliant with Americans with Disability Act requirements; the addition of a full size gymnasium; a new media center; new art, music and computer rooms; eight additional classrooms; converting the existing library to two classrooms; upgrading the HVAC system; and installing a fire suppression and sprinkler system. The building program capacity will increase from 407 (2004-05 school year) to approximately 601. Arcola Elementary School is the same generation as Lovettsville Elementary School and will undergo the same renovation plans that were recently completed at Lovettsville Elementary.

The adopted Board of Supervisors FY 2005 CIP contains funding for ES-18 (\$16,510,000) in FY 2006. The elementary school is scheduled to open in Fall 2007.

In the School Board Adopted FY 2005 CIP, the "conditions without change" enrollments for Arcola Elementary School, Hutchison Farm Elementary School, Little River Elementary School, and Arcola Elementary School for the 2006-07 academic year are 675, 1198, and 1046, respectively. For this same 2006-07 year, the combined enrollments for the four schools (Arcola, Hutchison Farm, Little

Approximately one-third to one-half of Arcola's projected enrollment will move to Legacy Elementary School with its opening in Fall 2005. The opening of Legacy Elementary School will leave approximately 2584 or fewer elementary-age students in the Freedom Cluster. The

current capacity for Hutchison Farm Elementary is 783, Little River Elementary is 796, and the planning capacity of Pinebrook Elementary School is 875 students, which brings the area to a total capacity of 2458 students. If Arcola Elementary School were closed for reconstruction (to reopen in Fall 2007), its projected 2006-07 enrollment could be accommodated in the three large elementary schools before the new Arcola Elementary School (ES-18) opens in Fall 2007.

Following the School Boards discussion on August 10 regarding Arcola Elementary, a public meeting was scheduled at Arcola Elementary School to discuss various options for the school. This meeting was held on September 16, 2004. School Board and staff outlined the following options for those in attendance:

Option 1 – No renovation, no addition to Arcola Elementary School.

Option 2 – Renovate and add to current Arcola Elementary School. Add 8 classrooms, add a full size gymnasium, add a new computer laboratory, add a new library, reconfigure interior space, including new furniture and equipment to bring the capacity to approximately 600 students. Cost \$11,515,000. To be funded in the FY 2006 CIP. Complete Fall 2007.

Option 3 – Renovate and add to current Arcola Elementary School. Add 8 classrooms, add a full size gymnasium, add a new computer laboratory, add a new library, building will be ADA compliant, add a fire suppression system (sprinkler system), reconfigure interior space, including new furniture and equipment to bring the capacity to approximately 600 students. Cost \$15,980,000. To be funded in the FY 2006 CIP. Complete Fall 2007.

Option 4 – Demolish current Arcola Elementary School and replace with a new facility. Cost \$21,450,000. To be funded in FY 2006 CIP. Complete Fall 2007.

The School Board evaluated community demographics, current and approved subdivisions and their projected demand, costs associated with the four options, and gathered public input from the Arcola school community regarding the alternatives. On October 6, 2004, after carefully weighing the different factors, the School Board

Finance, Construction, and Site Acquisition Committee voted (4-0-1, Mr. Guzman absent) to initiate the demolition of the current Arcola Elementary School and construct a new school in its place.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Loudoun County School Board initiate the demolition of the current Arcola Elementary School and construct a new Elementary school in its place, to open Fall 2007.

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School Board Meeting
October 12, 2004